

MOHAWK COUNCIL OF AKWESASNE

Sustaining our inherent rights, facing challenges together to build a strong and healthy future.



OFFICE OF THE GRAND CHIEF

Kentenha/October 2, 2018

Watkwanonhwera:ton/Greetings,

I hope everyone is doing well this first Tuesday morning of October. Time sure has flown by since my last report. It's good to see that we've all survived the hectic month of September, with the start of school and return to classes for our students, of all ages.

This month the Canadian Federal Government will legalize cannabis for recreational use. Earlier in 2018 our Council commissioned a survey to gauge the community on its views of the MCA regulating the sale and distribution of cannabis within Akwesasne. Our survey yielded 576 responses, with 74% responding the MCA should allow for recreational cannabis within Akwesasne. The survey also gave a strong indication that the MCA should adopt its own law and regulation governing the production, distribution, and sale of cannabis within Akwesasne. Our Council has been moving quickly to develop Interim Cannabis regulations prior to October 17, 2018, which is the date that the Canadian federal law legalizing cannabis will take effect. Following the enactment of Interim Regulations, we will then work with the Akwesasne Legislative Commission to develop and enact an Akwesasne Cannabis Law. Please keep an eye out for additional information on the development of the cannabis law.

On September 27, 2018 we hosted our Monthly General meeting at the Kana:takon Recreation Centre. The agenda included introductions of our Youth Council, followed by an update from the Aboriginal Rights and Research Office on the Tsikaristisere/Dundee land claim, and an update on the Entewatatha:wi Akwesasne/Canada self-government negotiations. The entire General Meeting recording can be found at https://youtu.be/aX2S1x_w6FY

As we move towards Fall we will inevitably begin to experience colder weather and start needing to heat our homes. I'm pleased to inform you that this year's benefit through the Akwesasne Heating Assistance Program has been increased from \$400 to \$500 for heads of household, and from \$600 to \$800 for Elders. Also as we get closer to the Winter Holidays, I remind MCA staff that we continue to offer payroll deductions for monthly contributions to a variety of community organization that serve our community, including the Holiday Helpers and the St. Regis Church food pantry.

In closing, a copy of my monthly report is attached for your information. Please feel free to reach out to me or any of our District Chiefs if you have any questions or comments.

I wish you the very best in the month ahead; have a spooktacular Halloween!

Sken:nen

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Abram Benedict".

Abram Benedict Grand Chief



Grand Chief Monthly Activity Report Seskehko:wa/September 2018

AUGUST 1, 2018 AMBE POST SECONDARY GRADUATES



On the evening of August 1, 2018 I was invited to attend an awards presentation and recognition event for the 2018 post secondary graduates. The Director of the Ahwesahsne Mohawk Board of Education (AMBE) welcomed the graduates and extended congratulatory remarks on behalf of AMBE. Following dinner, each graduate was presented with a certificate acknowledging their accomplishment. I congratulated the graduates on behalf of Council and the Mohawk Council of Akwesasne.

AUGUST 2, 2018 TRANSPORT CANADA

On August 2, 2018 members of our internal seaway negotiation team and members of the MCA Additions to Reserve (ATR) committee met with representatives from Transport Canada, as part of the preparations for the proposed Seaway settlement. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the possible preparation of a new ATR file for the lands that will be returned if the seaway settlement is accepted by Akwesasne.

AUGUST 9, 2018 COUNCIL ORIENTATION

As part of the ongoing orientation sessions, Council met with Mohawk Council of Akwesasne (MCA) departments on August 9, 2018 to hear a number of presentations.



The Executive Director for the MCA provided an overview of the Executive Service department's goals for the coming year and successes from the previous year. The Chief of Police, Director of Housing, Associate Director of Health, and the Director of Justice each presented on their respective department's goals and achievements. Each department also spoke about the political needs of the departments for Council to assist with. The remainder of the MCA departments were scheduled to present later in the month.

AUGUST 13, 2018 COUNCIL MEETING

- The Manager for the Aboriginal Rights and Research Office (ARRO) provided Council with an overview of the proposed timelines for a referendum for the acceptance of the Tsikaristisere /Dundee land claim settlement offer. The Manager also outlined what the next steps would be after the dates for the referendum are set by Council resolution.
- Council discussed a recent incident at the Anowarako:wa Arena and tasked administration to provide a report on the event and the measures that have been taken. Council agreed that a release

would be sent out regarding inappropriate behavior in MCA facilities.

- A briefing was provided on the importance of the Council's involvement in the Akwesasne–Canada self-government negotiations under the Entewatatha:wi Nation Building Program.
- Council discussed a recent complaint received regarding shorelines being filled in, further follow-up will take place.
- Representatives from the Ahkwesahsne Mohawk Board of Education (AMBE) provided Council with an overview of AMBE services, accomplishments, and political needs from Council.
- MCRs passed: Approval of lease for Colquhoun Island; Approval of lease for Pilon Island; Approval of assignment of lease Clark Island, Approval of assignment of lease Thompson Island; Approval of assignment of lease Renshaw Island; Approval of (2) assignments of leases Hamilton Island; Approval of lease Stanley Island; Approval of assignment of lease Stanley Island; Approval of (2) band transfers to Akwesasne (Membership approved); Approval to rescind (2) renovation loans (no longer needed); Approval of amendment to funding contract with MCYS; Approval of funding agreement with Indigenous Services Canada for Child and Family prevention funding; Acceptance of resignation from Akwesasne Youth Council; Approval of (2) allotments of land to community members (loans paid off); Approval of amendments to previous MCR for leasing (typo), Approval of (2) sets of Council Meeting minutes; Approval of (3) sets of Emergency Council Meeting Minutes; Approval to proceed with a referendum for the membership to consider the proposed settlement agreement between the Mohawk Council of Akwesasne and Canada for the Tsikaristisere/Dundee land claim.

AUGUST 14, 2018 DRESS FOR SUCCESS

On August 14, 2018 Council participated in a workshop titled "Dress for Success". This workshop was scheduled as part of the 2018-2021 Council orientation. The workshop was facilitated by Pathfinders Consulting, a local Akwesasne business. The workshop facilitator

explained to Council the various classes of fashion from casual, business casual, business formal, to black tie. It was explained that depending on the function and purpose of the meeting or event that you should dress accordingly. This workshop gave Council members a better understanding of appropriate dress wear.

AUGUST 15, 2018 CHIEFS OF ONTARIO ENGAGEMENT SESSION

On the evening of August 15, 2018, I joined the Director of Education and other Akwesasne Mohawk Board of Education (AMBE) staff and portfolio at Iohahi:io to receive a presentation from a representative from the Chiefs of Ontario (COO) on the proposed funding formula changes at Indigenous Services Canada (ISC). The COO had recently been engaged by ISC to host an engagement session on education funding transformation. The COO staff explained that the government was looking to roll all existing education funding streams into one formula, resulting in communities not having to apply annually for additional funding. The MCA representatives explained to the COO representatives that we are a very large First Nation and many of the existing funding formulas are capped at certain numbers which results in Akwesasne being disadvantaged because we are capped in all areas. We reiterated to the representatives that large First Nations needed to be given consideration due to the existing practice of capping and in addition, Akwesasne's border location should also be factored in funding formulas. At the time of the presentation no actual projected numbers were available on how much Akwesasne would receive based on the new formula changes. A future meeting will be set up to receive those numbers.

AUGUST 16, 2018 US CUSTOMS & BORDER PROTECTION

On August 16, 2018 Chief Darryl Lazore and I, along with representatives from the Mohawk Nation and the St Regis Mohawk Tribe, attended the US Customs at Massena to receive an update from the United States Customs and Border Protection (USCBP) on the recently announced driver license scanning pilot project. The USCBP representatives explained how the new equipment worked and that

so far it was working effectively to decrease processing times. It was also further explained that this equipment would remain in place at the Massena port to assist with processing times.

AUGUST 17, 2018 SEVEN LEAF MEDICAL CANNABIS TOUR

On August 17, 2018 Council was invited by Seven Leaf Medical Cannabis to tour the facility on Kawehno:ke. Lewis Mitchell of Seven Leaf explained to Council the process Seven Leaf underwent to become licensed by Health Canada. Council was shown the various processing rooms in the facility and given an explanation of each phase of the growing and harvesting process. During the tour members of Council were able to ask various questions about security, processing, and selling. Over the past several years, Seven Leaf has been very transparent to Council on their endeavor to become licensed to grow medical cannabis.



AUGUST 17, 2018 NEW DEMOCRATIC PARTY LEADER



On the evening of August 17, 2018 I was invited by Anne Quach, Member of Parliament for Valleyfield, to attend a reception in Valleyfield to welcome New Democratic Party (NDP) leader Jaqmeet Sing to the riding. Anne welcomed the community and Jaqmeet to the event and thanked them for coming out to support Anne and the NDP.

Jaqmeet spoke to the crowd about his party's priorities and strategies to beat the liberals in the upcoming election in 2019. Following the welcoming remarks from Jaqmeet he visited with the guests and spoke more in depth about party priorities.

AUGUST 20, 2018 COUNCIL MEETING

- Representatives from the Aboriginal Rights and Research Office (ARRO) provided Council with a briefing on the ongoing preparations for the upcoming referendum for the Tsikaristisere/Dundee land claim.
- Council set the agenda for the General Meeting scheduled for August 30, 2018 at the Kawehno:ke Recreation.
- A briefing was provided to Council on youth representation on the Overseers for the Akwesasne Community Settlement Trust; further research will be done.
- Council discussed the ongoing concerns with automobile dealers utilizing the territory for delivery of vehicle purchases to non-Akwesasronon; further follow up will be done.
- A briefing was provided on the MCA Justice department's pre-development of a Akwesasne Cannabis Law.
- Council agreed that Chief Tim Thompson will chair next week's meeting in the absence of Grand Chief Benedict.
- MCRs passed: Approval of renewal of mortgage agreement with Canada Mortgage Housing Corporation (CMHC); Approval of (2) upgrade loans to community member(s); Approval of BMO mortgage guarantee for community member; Approval of access to territory for specific business equipment financing; Approval to transfer and open new registered savings bond for children in care; Approval of signing authorities for the MCA main bank account; Approval of 2017/18 Audit for Ministry of Training Colleges and Universities-Basic Skills Program.

AUGUST 21, 2018 MOHAWK GOVERNMENT ORIENTATION

On the morning of August 21, 2018 the Government Support Manager and the Executive Assistants for Mohawk Government provided our Council with an overview of each person's responsibility at Mohawk Government. This presentation was part of the ongoing Council orientation. The internal process in place for Chiefs travel and what the expectations are for the Chiefs when they travel on behalf of Council was also explained.

AUGUST 21, 2018 AKWESASNE MEMBERSHIP BOARD REVIEW

On August 21, 2018 as part of our ongoing review of the Akwesasne Membership Board, the review committee met with consultant Dr. Rose Alma McDonald to receive the final report and to review the recommended legislative changes to support the operational efficiency of the board. Dr. McDonald provided an overview of the process, the findings of the interviews and the review, and outlined the recommended changes. The committee received the report and agreed that an internal meeting of the committee would be scheduled to discuss next steps for implementation.

AUGUST 22, 2018 ISC CHILD WELFARE REFORM



On August 22, 2018 I traveled to Toronto to participate in an engagement session with Indigenous Services Canada (ISC) on the exploration to potentially co-develop options for Federal Child Welfare Legislation. Over the past year, ISC has been working with First Nation communities to transform the child welfare system for First Nations. Introducing legislation is an option that Canada has been exploring. The

Director General of Child and Family Service Reform for Indigenous Services Canada outlined that the government would like to introduce legislation in a two-stage approach. The first phase would be to introduce principal based legislation, then after the 2019

federal election the government would work to introduce more comprehensive legislation that promotes the transformation of child welfare in First Nation communities. Following the introductions and overview of the work that has already been done to promote transformation, the participants were broken up into 4 groups to have group discussions on potential approaches and principals to consider. In the afternoon of the engagement session the groups reported on the breakout session and outlined the common themes from the discussions. ISC representatives also provided the participants with a presentation and report on the Jordan's Principle program and also look questions from the participants. The day ended with a wrap up from ISC who committed to providing a report to the participants on what they heard from the day long session.

AUGUST 23, 2018 PROPOSED NATURAL GAS EXPANSION

Earlier in 2018, the Ontario Government announced a funding grant to expand natural gas into communities. Enbridge Gas had approached the Mohawk Council of Akwesasne (MCA) about jointly applying for this grant to provide natural gas services to Kawehno:ke. Council considered the potential benefit to the community and decided that to submit a joint application with Enbridge. On August 23, 2018 Council met to learn more about the grant, what natural gas is, and what the pros and cons would be. The MCA hired a consultant who previously worked for Enbridge Gas to assist with educating the community on natural gas and the potential project. It was decided that over the next few months we would host information sessions with the community and then begin a door to door survey of Kawehno:ke residents on acceptance of hooking up to natural gas if it were to become available. Over the next few months, information packets on natural gas and what the potential project consists of will be mailed to all homes on Kawehno:ke.

AUGUST 24, 2018 OPG 60TH ANNIVERSARY



On August 24, 2018 I was invited to attend a 60th anniversary celebration to commemorate the construction of the RH Saunders Hydro Dam. The President and the Board Chair of Ontario Power Generation (OPG) and the President and Chief Executive

Officer of the New York Power Authority (NYPA) welcomed the invitees and spoke about the important working relationship the two companies has. OPG Board Chairman Bernard Lord also spoke about the significant importance of their relationship with Akwesasne.

AUGUST 27, 2018 COUNCIL MEETING

- Representatives from the Aboriginal Rights and Research Office (ARRO) provided Council with a briefing on the ongoing preparations for the upcoming referendum for the Tsikaristisere/Dundee land claim.
- Council was briefed on the upcoming hosting of a delegation from the Irish Embassy; further planning will occur.
- A briefing was provided on a case whereby a community business is being affected by the Canada Revenue Agency; further follow up will occur.
- Council was briefed on a land accretion and property dispute; further follow up will occur.
- MCRs passed: Approval of allotment of land to community member (loan paid off); Approval of assignment of lease on Hamilton Island; Approval of (3) housing upgrades to community member(s); Approval of BMO mortgage guarantee for community member; Approval of amendment to Akwesasne/Canada funding agreement; Approval of AMPS SAVE unit report; Approval of Mohawk Court Duty Counsel Contract.

AUGUST 28, 2018 MEETING WITH SIBC

On the morning of August 28, 2018 Chief Thompson, Chief Roundpoint, and I met with representatives from the Seaway International Bridge Corporation (SIBC) to receive an update on the ongoing corridor improvements happening on Kawehno:ke. We discussed the improvements and the potential modifications being made for access to land lots on each side of the corridor.

AUGUST 29, 2018 HUNTINGDON HOSPITAL FUNDRAISER

On the evening of August 29, 2018 I attended the Huntingdon Hospital annual golf tournament and roast beef dinner. While I didn't golf in the tournament, I did attend the evening dinner. During the dinner, I was able to meet the Mayor of Huntingdon and the Mayor of Dundee.

AUGUST 30, 2018 MONTREAL MAYORS FIRST NATION SUMMIT



I was invited by Montreal Mayor Valérie Plante to attend the first summit of First Nations and Quebec municipalities on reconciliation. Mayor Plante brought together 50 mayors from across Quebec including two municipalities associations and over 20 Chiefs from the province as well. The morning began with a closed to the public session between the mayors and

First Nation Chiefs who dialogued on initiatives that communities and the city have undertaken to promote reconciliation. Not all cities have undertaken initiatives, but this dialogue was an opportunity for the participants to learn from one another. In the afternoon a panel of leaders spoke in more depth about their experiences and took questions from the participants. Following the day long session, the two municipalities associations, the City of Montreal, and the Assembly of First Nations of Quebec and Labrador (AFNQL) signed a commitment document to further promote reconciliations between the First Nation representatives and Quebec.

AUGUST 30, 2018 GENERAL MEETING

On the evening of August 30, 2018 Council hosted the first General Meeting of the 2018-2021 term. The evening began with introductions of Council members to the community and each Council member also identified their selected portfolios. Following the welcoming introductions, a group of youth who recently attended an Independent First Nation (IFN) youth gathering in northern Ontario provided a report to the community about the theme and activities of the IFN gathering and on their experiences. The Government Support Manager provided a presentation and report on the 2018-2021 Council orientation. A representative from the Aboriginal Rights and Research Office (ARRO) provided the community with information on the upcoming referendum on the Tsikaristisere/Dundee Land Claim and outlined the voting dates. The General Meeting recording can be found at <https://youtu.be/bGil6fiNKg>.